

THE NEW PLAYS

"Smilin' Through"

Has a Spiritualistic Twist

BY CHARLES DARNTON

ROMANCE is strangely mixed with spiritualism in "Smilin' Through," the so-called fantasy by Allan Langdon Martin in which Jane Cowi changed from sunshine to shadow at the Broadhurst Theatre last night. Incidentally, it must be said that Miss Cowi was always something more than a shadow.

It is of first importance to announce that "Smilin' Through" has a spiritualistic twist. To begin with, the mother of the boy and mother of the girl whose children have the human failing of falling in love, as the dreadful phrase goes, indulge in a sympathetic chat "outside the garden gate"—which may swing on the hinges of Paradise. We poor mortals, of course, can't be altogether sure of this sort of thing. The best we can do is to give our imagination to the scenery.

When the author comes down to earth he lands his play in an English garden, where two old cronies argue over a game of dominoes, and Uncle John insists that his niece Kathleen shall have nothing to do with Kenneth Wayne, the son of his dead-and-buried enemy. John begins a story that is interrupted by figures of the past. Now, these figures confuse the real and the unreal. In other words, there is bad stage-management at this point.

It's another matter when the scene goes back fifty years and the old story is enacted. John Carteret is waxing sentimental with his bride-elect, Moonveen Clare, when his rejected and drunken rival, Jeremiah Wayne, pops in and pops off a gun that kills Moonveen instead of the hated bridegroom. How Jeremiah escaped hanging and became the father of Kenneth is something that only "a fantasy" can explain. As for Kenneth, he is given the gate by the vindictive uncle, but he gets through it on his return from the war as a crippled soldier, and peace at last settles over the garden.

With her natural beauty enhanced by every artifice of the toilet, Miss Cowi gave pictorial value to the play. Though quite material as the spirit who came to visit John in his garden, she was a lovely apparition. In these rare moments she wore a red wig. As Kathleen she was herself, except for an Irish brogue that she forgot from time to time. Anyway, both as Kathleen and Moonveen she went smilin' through, according to the song, and gained the personal success she usually achieves.

Henry Stephenson was excellent as Uncle John, and Ethelbert D. Hale as Kenneth and Moonveen as Dr. Owen. Orme Caldara played the drunken father and the young lover in manly fashion. Charlotte Grunville and Philip Tongue were other members of a well-chosen cast.

"Smilin' Through" has more than a ghost of a show as a play, for it is beautifully staged and capably acted.

About Plays and Players

By BIDE DUDLEY

HENRY NEAGLE, who exhibits a contract covering the American rights to Brian's play, "La Robe Rouge," which John D. Williams has announced as a starring vehicle for Lionel Barrymore, tells us that, under an agreement with Mr. Williams, he is to be a part owner in the production, but states that final plans to that end have not been accepted by him.

"If Mr. Williams and I do not reach an agreement," he said, "I shall take steps to produce the play myself." It is believed in theatrical circles that Mr. Williams and Mr. Neagle will arrange their plans amicably. It would be interesting indeed if two productions of "La Robe Rouge" were to be projected on Broadway at the same time.

TO MAKE TOO HAPPY. Seven hundred "Hills" will there, from nine to fourteen years old, will be the guests of Hugo Rosenfeld at the Children's Theatre, known also as the 654 Street Music Hall, Friday afternoon. Every child will receive a doll, a pair of stockings and, if needed, a pair of shoes. Pretty fine of Mr. Rosenfeld, we'll say.

NUTT'S DOPE. Jeff Nutt, special correspondent of this column, is to celebrate the advent of the New Year in proper style. He writes us as follows: "Dear Dud: I and the wife have reserved a table at the Merry Bats Cafe for Saturday night and will see the New Year in with them. To-day I got hold of a bottle of something to help out the celebration. We won't have to pay carriage, as it is already sorted. The cafe is going to have waiters for this celebration, which will make it nice. Those big arms on the chairs get awfully sloppy sometimes. The wife sent you a valentine and hopes it will reach you by New Year's. She's a funny kid, but now and then I really like her. Well, have a good time Saturday night and watch your step-father—Jeff."

COINING A JOKE. The telephone rang a while ago and when we answered a voice said: "Will you answer a question for me?" "Sure!" we replied. "I want to change my place of abode, but can't find an apartment. Have you been to the mint lately?" "No." "Well, do you think I could get new quarters at the mint?" We blamed it on Alexander Graham Bell.

IT'S "ROUND THE TOWN." Herman Timberg has chosen "Round the Town" as a title for his new musical production. Herman wrote the book, lyrics and music and will look after the staging. He's going to let the regular stage hands handle the scenery.

HOUSMAN DISCOURAGED. Lou Housman, the veteran Chicago theatrical man, is in town. Asked last night about theatrical conditions in the city on the Chicago River, he said: "Conditions are wonderfully up-bermish. As Plato said in the days of old, 'I'm show-crazy, folks,' and that is the state of affairs. Of course, now and then we get a show built along platonic lines and then we suffer. Have a cigar; I wonder

where I can get a glass of lemonade. Chicago's dry, too."

LUESCHER TO STAY. Mark A. Luescher has decided not to leave the Hippodrome after all. When he agreed to become associated with the Martin Beck vaudeville interests recently, he started something. The Hippodrome people came back with a "No" that startled him. Mr. Beck released him from his arrangement but threatened to capture him at some later date. Under the title of "My New Year Resolution," Mr. Luescher has sent us the following: "Resolved, with the gracious consent of Martin Beck, that I will not, during 1920, leave Charles Dillingham, the Hippodrome, the elephants, Sixth Avenue and the most loyal and efficient staff any theatre in the world has ever assembled, or any chief executive has been privileged to serve with. Snappy New Year!—Mark A. Luescher."

GOSSIP. "East is West" will reach its 400th performance to-night. Thomas Egan will be starred in a musical play by Augustin MacHugh. List, basso, is singing "Down Deep in the Cellar" at the Rivoli. Wots all love it.

Alex Gerber is writing lyrics for Wilmer & Romberg's new one, "Three Kisses."

Five hundred additional pairs of opera glasses have been put in the Century. "Aphrodite" is there. To-day's matinee of "Night Lodging" at the Plymouth has been postponed to Saturday morning.

Arthur Hammerstein's new musical play is now called "Toinette." Central Monday night!

Special matinees will be given at all Shubert theatres to-morrow. Casino has one Friday, too!

Mariel Hope, in Otto Harbach's "Ready to Occupy," is regarded by Producer Woods as a "find."

Earl Carroll's play, "The Way to Heaven," did well in Providence, Town with such a name ought to like a "Heaven" show.

Ralph Kellard has been engaged by Comstock & Gies for an important role in "The Light of the World."

Mabel Nunn of the Winter Garden staff will marry Leo Levy in two weeks. They'll live in Panama.

Sam H. Harris returned this morning from Chicago, where he saw his first production as an independent manager, "Welcome Stranger," open.

"When You're in Right With the Right Little Girl" is a new song to be introduced in "The Magic Melody" to-morrow night by Charles Purcell and Renee Deling.

Two rows of seats have been removed from the Capitol Theatre to make room for the new orchestra, but Ben Alwell says the place still has the largest seating capacity in the world.

The Selwyns have engaged Ralph Morgan to succeed Roland Young in the new comedy, "Rollo's Wild Out."

"Pat Rooney and Marion Bent will offer a new time a new act called "Rings of Smoke" to-night at a special show at the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

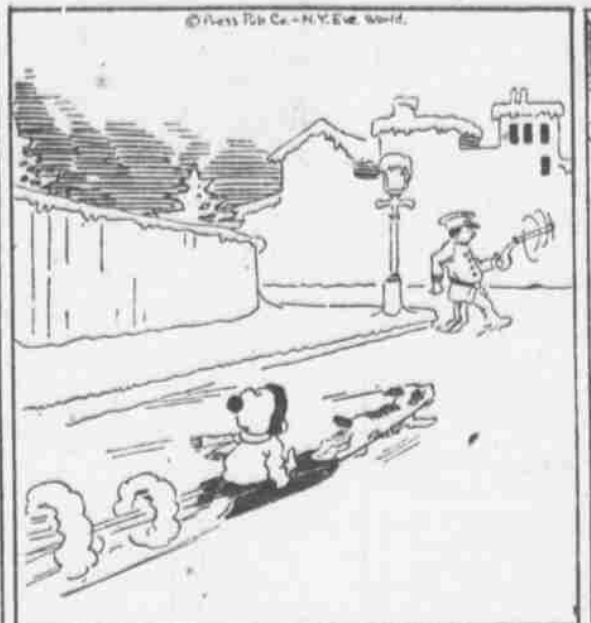
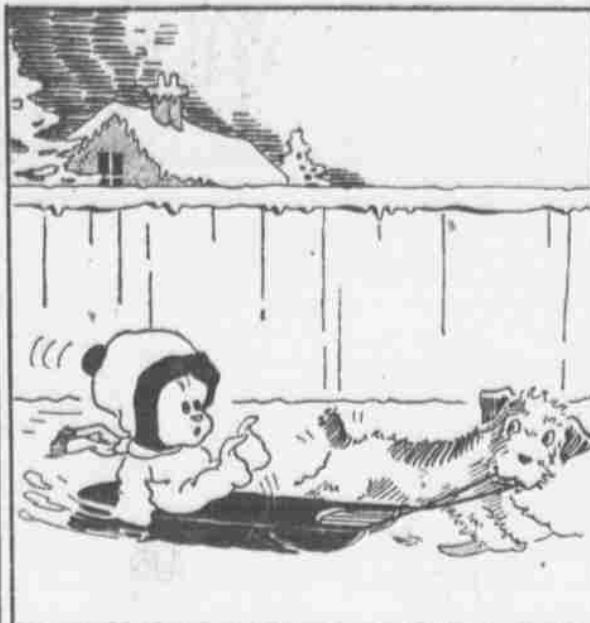
Edith Leonard's Minstrel Band at Pabst-Harlem Dance Hall will play a Prohibition dirge as the New Year comes in to-night. Anna Wade, Mabel West and the Kahn Brothers will dance at Terrace Garden Dance Palace.

A THOUGHT FOR TO-DAY. We met a fellow to-day who hasn't just written a play and a producer who hasn't six new plays in rehearsal.

FOOLISHMENT. The limerick bug's my complaint, I fear I've the limerick faint, Perhaps you don't like me, Well, don't you dare strike me, Just keep yourself under restraint.

FROM THE CHESTNUT TREE. "I have a bad cold." "Why don't you take something for it?" "What'll you give?"

RUSTY AND BUB



They Made a Hit With the Officer!

THE BIG LITTLE FAMILY



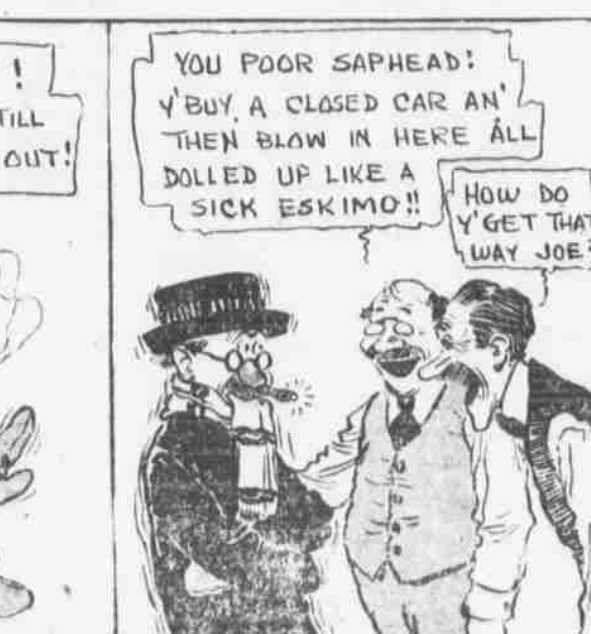
Or Winter Croquet, Say We!

LITTLE MARY MIXUP



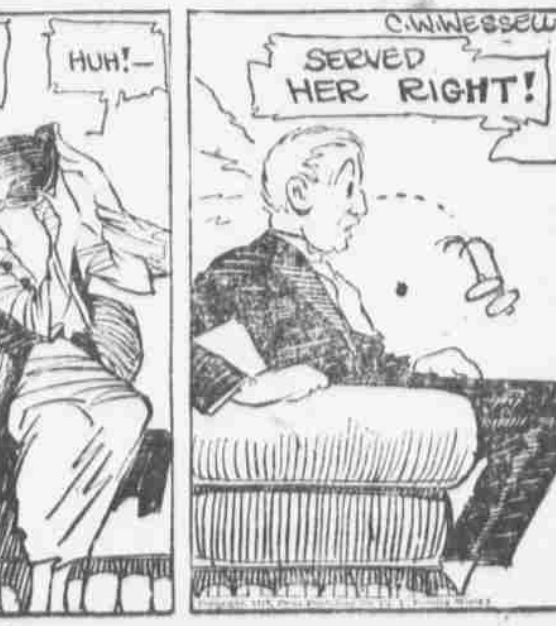
Brother's No Boob; the Keg on the Wagon Contains Sugar!

JOE'S CAR



Tell Us What You REALLY Think of Her, Joe!

LEAVE IT TO LOU



This Egg Should Have Been Placed on the Soviet Ark!

FROM THE CHESTNUT TREE

